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Idolatry Non - Vedic
As Expressed By
EUROPEANS
BY
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Idolatry Non-Vedic as Express by Europeans.

P R E F A C E

(OF II EDITION.)

Though the present tract is a small one; but for its compilation, I have consulted nearly all the European authorities on the subject and have attempted to give here striking passages from them in the hope that they would carry conviction to the readers.

**Reviews from the well - known
Scholars of the Arya Samaj.**

(A) This is a small tract in which Swami Mangalanand Puri has collected the opinions of European and Indian Sanskrit scholars as well as of some Historians to show that Idolatry is not sanc-

tioned in the Vedas. The tract will be very useful in bringing home to such persons as believe that Idol worship is taught in the Vedas, the real vedic teaching on the subject. The tract should be freely distributed among persons belonging to non-vedic persuasions.

(Sd) Ghasi Ram, M. A. L. L. B.

Adhishthata Gurukula Brindaban

& President Arya P. N. Sabha U. P. (Meerut)

(B) Opinion of Babu Shyam Sunderlal B. A., L. L. B., Vakeel, President Arya Samaj Mainpuri.

“ Idolatry Non- Vedic is another tract in English by Swami Mangalanand Pury—The author has quoted a good many European and Asiatic men of letters of admitted authority and world-wide celebrity to establish that the Vedas have no support for idolatry and has by cogent reasons succeeded in convincing that the real origin is in fact Christianity.

The tract is very instructive and interesting and the quotations in it form a very useful and inspiring reading. The author has done well in fixing a very low price for it which is but one anna and six pies only—”

(C) Shreeman Rao (Master) Atma Ram ji Amritsari, one of the best leaders of the Arya Samaj writes in Hindi :—

“ Thanks are due to the author of this little tract (Idolatry Non-Vedic) which is so good that Sabhas and Samajes should distribute its copies to all the college students and those of upper classes of the high schools. Though its price is very cheap but as regards its importance it is most valuable tract and will prove most useful to the young Hindu collegeans for their spiritual elevation as it would give them a lesson of worshipping the One Supreme God, the Nirakara (bodyless) Brahma.

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1-10-31.

} Mangal Ananda
Pury.

OM
Idolatry Non-Vedic.

As Expressed by Europeans

The modern Hindus are Idolworshippers but Swamy Dayananda Saraswaty, the founder of the Aitya Samaj, taught the world that neither the ancient Hindus (Aryas) were Idol worshippers, nor the Vedas and other authoritative books of the Aryas contain even a single word in favour of Idolatry.

How far Swamy ji is correct, can be judged from the fact that many other impartial scholars of the Vedas also came to the same conclusion, and they too very strongly opposed idolatry. We are, therefore going to give here some quotations from the works of learned European and other well-known scholars of Sanskrit. We give the reader liberty of self decision but would request him to attach proper importance to the opinions collected here for his information and guidance.

CHAPTER—I.

Several Europeans on Idolatry.

(A) Sir Monier Williams writes ;—

“ It is very doubtful whether idolatry existed* in the time of Manus'- compilation of the Smṛity ”
(Indian Wisdom Page 226)

(B) J. I. Wheeler says :—

†“ They appear to have had no temples but either performed their sacrifices in the open air or else in a sacrificial chamber set apart in each dwelling. ”.
(Wheeler's History of India Introduction Page 11)

*In the present Manu Smṛity, in which though there are many interpolations, still no mention of Idolworship is to be found. The word “ *Devamandira* ” is used, which may give an idea of *Dharma-shala*, Seminary etc. (as ‘ *Deva* ’ means the learned ones, or a place for performing *Havana Yagnya* and *Sandhya Upasana* &c. But certainly there were no idols because there is no trace of it in the text.

†The Ancient Hindus.

(C) Professor W. D. Brown says :—

“And the strongest proofs show to the thoughtful student that the ancient Hindus were neither the practisers of Idolatry nor the unlearned, uncivilised barbaric race. ”

(D) Mr. Mill Says :—

Idolatry is an altogether after-growth: Springing from the minds incapable of entertaining the elevated abstract notions of the premitive creed. The Declension explains itself. The obscuration and weakening of the idea of the Divine unity were indicated first by the impersonation of the several discoveries made of the Supreme Being in the operations and effects. These impersonations were not so many distinct and independent deities, but representatives of One and the great Deity contemplated under particular aspects. ” (Mills' British India, quoted in the Vedic Magazine for May 1918 Page 117.)

(B) Again Maxmüller adds that :—

“ It has, sometimes, been asserted that the Vedic religion is* extinct in India, that the modern Brahmanic religion, as founded on the *Puranas* and *tantras* consists in a belief in *Vishnu*, *Shiva* and *Brahma* and manifests itself in the worship of the most hideous idols ”. (Origin and Growth of Religions Page 154.)

(C) Further, on Professor Max Müller says :—

“ If we could ask *Vashishtha* or *Vishwamitra* or any of the old *Aryan* Poets, whether they really thought that the sun, the golden ball-which they saw, a man with legs and arms, with a heart and lungs; they would, no doubt, laugh at us, and tell us that though we understood their language, we did not

*But our great Swamy Dayananda Saraswati did his best to have the *Vedic* text explained properly and thereby to regenerate the true *Vedic Dharma*.

understand their thoughts."* (Origin & Growth of Religions Page 273.)

CHAPTER—III.

R. C. Dutt on Idolatry.

Romesh Chandra Dutt, one of the most distinguished of Indian Scholars, and by no means an Arya Samajist, writes :—

("A") "There is no mention of idols in the Rigveda none of temples or places of worship "

(Civilization of ancient India Vol. 1 Page 66 by R. C. Dutt.)

*Vashishtha etc, were the the *Rishis* of the *Vedic* times. Their names were recorded on the top of the hymns, known after them. A *Rishi* is the seer of the *mantra*.

Such are the thoughts contained in the *Puranas* that the Sun, the Moon, the Mars and the Saturn etc. have their bodies. have got wives and children etc. as we have. Here Professor Max Muller means to say that such ideas are not to be found in the *Vedas*.

(B) Again R. C. Dutt writes :—

“ And the practical necessity for Geometrical studies no longer existed in India when the Hindus began to worship images in the *Lauranic* Age, and the setting up of sacred fires in the worshippers' house was discontinued, and the construction of altars was forgotten ”

(Civilization of ancient India Vol. 1 Page 269-274)

(C) Further on he adds thus :—

“ ... and knew of no image-worship.

* It is a fact that image worship took the place of *Havna* and *Yajnya* for which the sacred fires were preserved. In the Vedic times, geometrical knowledge was highly needed for construction of altars which were of different shapes viz- Rectangular, Pentagonal, Hexagonal and Octagonal &c. when the Hindus instituted Idolatry instead of the *Havana* and *Yajnya*, there was no necessity of the *Rekha-Ganita* (Geometry), consequently that science was neglected.

2. Buddhism generated into idolworship in the centuries after the Christian Era, and it is impossible not to suspect that modern Hinduism borrowed into imageworship from Buddhism.

3. It is certain when the code of Manu was compiled, in the Buddhist age, worship was gaining ground, and was condemned by that conservative Law-giver.

4. The worship of images in temples was unknown to Hindus, before the Buddhist revolution; but seems to have come into fashion when Buddhism was the prevailing religion.

5. That Manu indignantly classed temple-priests with vendors of liquor and sellers of *meat.

(Civilization of Ancient India by R. C. Dutt Vol II Page 189 to 195.)

* The Arya Samajic scholars are sure that there are many interpolations in modern *Manu Smriti* and that is one of them. Such *shlokas* were mixed in the text in the Buddhist period when Idolatry was instituted. But even from this *shloka*, it is clear how indignantly the author hates idolatry.

(D) " Such in brief is the ceremony of the Agniachana or the setting up of sacrificial fires, which formed an important duty in the life of every *Hindu* house-holder in ancient days, when the gods were worshipped by each man in his fireplace; *and temples and idols were unknown,* "*

(His Civilization Vol. I Page 134)

(E) Regarding the Pilgrimages, R. C. Duttd writes thus :—

" Pilgrimages, which were rare or unknown in very ancient times, were organised on a stupendous scale. The great towns of India were crowned with temples and new gods and new images found sanctuaries in stone edifices, and in the hearts of ignorant worshippers."

(Civilization Vol: II Page 195)

(F) Further on R. C. Dutt, mentions :—

" At the time of Chinese Traveller Hown Tsang's arrival in 629 A. D., there was no trace of the modern big temples at Jagannath Poree. "

(Civilization Vol. I Page 151.)

*The Italic are ours.

CHAPTER—IV.

Elphinstone on Idolatry.

(A) Mr. M. Elphinstone writes :—

“ There seems to have been no images and no visible types of the objects of worship. ”

(Elphinstone's History of India Page 40)

(B) Again Mr. Elphinstone says :—

“at the same time, they erected no temple and addressed no worship to the true God...”

(Elphinstone's History of India Page 93—94)

(C) Further on he adds :—

“ Mr. Colebrooke avowedly confines himself to the five* sacraments which existed in Manu's time; but there is a *new* sort of worship never alluded to *in the institutes*, which now forms one of the principle duties of every Hindu.

* Five “ Mahayajnyas” which are the daily performances of every Dwija (Brahmna, Kshatriya and Vaishya.)

This is the worship of images before whom many † prostration and other acts of adoration must daily be performed "

(Elphinstone's History of India Page 110)

CHAPTER—V.

Wilson on Idoltry.

(1) Professor H. H. Wilson says :—

" There is (in the Vedas,) no mention of any temple, nor any reference to public place of worship and it is clear that the worship was entirely domestic. "

(Wilson's Rig Veda—Introduction, Volume I, Page XV)

(2) Again Professor Wilson adds:—

" The name of Siva, of Mahadeva, of Durga of Kali, of Rama, of Krishna never occur, as far as we are yet aware, we have a Rudra, who in after times is identified with *Siva*. " (Ibid P. XXVI)

(3) Again he writes :—

" And there is not the slightest allusion to the form in which, for the last ten centuries, at least,

†Throwing down or falling.

he seems to have been almost exclusively worshipped in India that of the *Linga* or *Phallus*. Neither is there the slightest hint of another important feature of later Hinduism, the *Trimurty* or trine combination of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva."

(Ibid Page XXVII).

(4) Further on he remarks :—

" And yet Manu notices no Avatara, no Rama, no Krishna; and is, consequently, admitted to belong anterior to the growth of their worship as set forth in the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. "

(Ibid P, XI, XII)

(5) Mr. Mill quotes H. H. Wilson's opinion as following :—

".....but they (Brahmanas) never, like the priests of other pagan nations, or those of the Jews, conducted public worship, worship for individuals indiscriminately, worship in temples or make offerings to idols.

A Brahmana who makes offerings to idols is held as degraded and unfit to be invited to religious feasts."

(Manu: II 152, 180)—(Mill's History of B. India Vol. II page 192 F. N.)

(6) Again Professor H. H. Wilson says :—

“But the worship of deified heroes is no part of that system, nor are the incarnations of deities suggested in any other portion of the text, which I have yet seen, though such are sometimes hinted at by the commentators.”

“ It is also true that the worship of the Vedas is for the most part, domestic worship, consisting of prayers and oblations offered in their own houses, not in temples by individuals, for individual good, and addressed to unreal presences, not to visible types.

“ In a word, the religion of the Vedas is not idolatry.”

(H. H. Wilson's Vishnu purana preface page 111)

(7) Again he remarks :—

“...The want of discrimination between the creature and creator is the usual progress of idolatry. The type becomes mistaken for the proto type: nor is sufficient allowance made for the mysticism that evidently pervades much of the Vedas and gives a character other than literal* to their phraseology.”
(Mill's History of British India Vol I page 392 F. N)

* Just as it is stated in the Vedas that the sky is His head, the Sun is His eye, the air His ear,

(8) Moreover he remarks :—

“.....But this practice is modern, *Jagannatha-himself is modern and has no place in the Vaishnava Puranas*—It is not improbable that the *present shrine attained reputation as a place of pilgrimage no longer ago than a century*”*

(Mill's History of British India page 416, F. N.)

CHAPTER—VI.

Mohammadan Scholars on Idolatry.

Now we produce opinions of two most learned Mohammadan gentlemen of medieval India, who

the Earth His foot etc. In such passages surely His (God's) shape is not mentioned. He, according to the Vedas, is *Nirakara* (having no body or shape) and hence has no limbs eye and ear etc. But it means that the Almighty Lord is present in each and every being and the whole universe, if personified, is to be as if a body of that Omnipresent God. All these are the allegories and metaphors of the Vedic literature.

*The Italics are ours.

SALAR JUNG

also declare that *Hinduism* has no connection with Idol-worship :—

(1) Maulana Abul Fazal, the Prime Minister of Akbar, the Great writes :—

“ They (Hindus) one and all believe in the unity of God - head and although they hold images in high veneration, *yet they are by no means "idolators"* as the ignorant suppose.,’

(Ayeen Akbari, translated by F. Godwin Vol VI page 294)

(2) Maulana Alberuni, a great Scholar of Arabic and Sanskrit who came into India, with Mahmud of Ghazni in 1024 A. D. writes :—

“.....But we declare at once that they (i. e. the Idols) are held only by the common uneducated people.

For those who march on the path to liberation* or those, who study Philosophy and Theology and who desire abstract truth which they call *sara*, are entirely free from worshipping anything but God alone, and would never dream of worshipping an image manufactured to represent Him ”.

(Alberuni's India translated by Doctor E. C. Sachau Vol I Chapter XI Page 112-113)

*The Italics are ours.

(3) Again Maulana Alberuni adds thus :—

“Our object in mentioning all this mad raving (about several idols etc.,) was to teach the reader the description of an idol, if he happens to see one, and to illustrate what we have said before, that such idols are erected only for uneducated low class people of little understanding, that the Hindus never made an idol of any supernatural being, much less of God.”

(Ibid Page 112)

CHAPTER—VII.

Origin of Idolatry is Christianity.

Our Mohammadan and Christian bretheren proclaim that Hinduism is the Chief Origin of “Idolatry” in the world, but surely they are wrong. The above quotations speak for themselves that our ancient fore fathers were not idolators. Swami Rama Tirtha though he was not an European but of course who proved a teacher of many Europeans and Americans, asks—

“.....What brought idolatry into India ? To day the Christian folk tell you that the people are idol-worshippers. But in the voluminous Vedic writings in the writings on Poetry, Grammer, Mathematics.

Architecture and Music in India, we find not the least reference or allusion to idolatry. Wherefrom then did this Idolatry come? It forms no part of the religion in India. This idolatry in India came through the Christians. People have not read that page of history yet, but this investigation of mine will be issued* in printed form?

"I prove it from external as well as internal evidence, that between the 4th and 5th centuries after Christ, some Roman Catholic Christians are still present in India to-day. They are called St. Thomas Christians living in the Southern part of India. These Christians introduced Idolatry. Then from internal evidence, I prove that the greatest advocate of idolatry, Ramanuja, had for his preceptor one of these St. Thomas Christians. The first statue before which these men bowed, I know and we see in this first statue that its face is no oriental one.

"This shows my blessed ones, that the origin of Idolatry is from what you call Christianity, you took it there. The missionaries come to-day denouncing idolatry, pulling it down on the one

*Unfortunately his early death prevented him

hand and on the other they make these images and sell them to make money. This is how you (Christian missionaries) want to convert those people. Will, these idols, which they make and sell to the people, have a greater force than the Gospel? It is for you to decide."

(In Woods of God-realization Volume III page 311-312)

On production of so many quotations from Europeans and other Sanskrit Scholars, we need not write much on the subject. The reader can now decide for himself how far an attempt to search out a passage of the Veda in support of idolatry can be successful.

In short, we know that:—

(A)..... The God of the Old Testament talks with Adam and Eve and eats from the kitchen of Abraham and appears in the clouds to have a talk with Moses.

(B).....The God of the Christianity or New Testament can send an angel to cause virgin to become impregnant and thereby have the "ONLY SON" born in the world.

(C)The God of the Quran is ever ready to appear before Adam, Noah and Abraham.

(D).....But the God of the Vedas is One, Who is not confined in any limited area or in a body, but surely is present every where, in every thing and being.

O Sanatanist Hindu Gentlemen! you have read the above quotations and come to understand that it is not only Dayananda who recommends you to leave Idol-worship but that all others who have gone through the Vedas and other ancient shastras, give you the same idea; and therefore you should please accept the truth as you know the Upanishads:—

“Truth only will be Victorious.”

END.